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THE CLOSE OF A CHAPTER

by Felix Morley

The British recognition of Communist China, coming on the heels of President Truman's final abandonment of the Nationalist cause, has brought to a close the most miserable chapter in the whole history of American diplomacy. Even the New York Times, staunch follower of the Roosevelt-Truman line, is forced to admit editorially that: "We have taken a terrible beating in the Far East."

As yet, however, there is little realization of what the results of that beating are likely to be. The Communist conquest of China is in itself an event of historical importance second only to the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. But the loss of China is, to paraphrase Winston Churchill, only "the end of the beginning". With Mr. Truman's unconditional surrender of Formosa, initiative in the cold war everywhere passes to the clever men in the Kremlin. We can be sure they will exploit their advantages to the full.

Among the results to be anticipated is the further deterioration of the United Nations. In spite of Soviet sabotage this organization has heretofore been able to function in a fumbling manner. Russia has stultified the Council by use of the veto power, but with the Soviet bloc a a small minority of the Assembly there has been some prospect that the veto difficulty could be by-passed.

This likelihood is now diminished. It is not merely that before long Vishinsky will have an Oriental colleague to give Moscow control of two out of the five permanent Council seats. The Soviet influence in the Assembly will also be strengthened. From now on, as in the recent test on the internationalization of Jerusalem, the Government of the United States can expect to be outvoted in the more democratic organ of U.N. Continuing enthusiasm for an international organization in which we are continuously outsmarted by Russia is not to be expected.

The growing reaction towards isolationism was obvious in President Truman's non-interventionist statement on Formosa. This reaction is certain to be stimulated by the British recognition of the Mao Tze-tung regime, not less so because we shall ultimately follow the British lead in this matter.

If our foreign policy since 1945 could point to a single tangible accomplishment, is was the solidification of Anglo-American relations.

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The substance of even this one achievement has now been largely whittled away. In domestic affairs our British ally has moved a long distance towards a National Socialism which is anathema to traditional American thinking. In Western Europe the British are openly skeptical about the economic "integration" that Mr. Hoffman has been vainly preaching. Now, in the Far East, Great Britain moves to make friends with a Chinese regime that has humiliation of the United States as its clear objective.

II

There is, of course, a body of American opinion that would gladly follow Britain into National Socialism as domestic policy, and into military alliances in the foreign field. But the task of those who would push the American people down these devious paths is becoming increasingly difficult. The inconsistencies are too clear and, what is more influential, they are too costly to be passively endured.

Senator Taft has been prompt to point out the contradiction between the early "Truman Doctrine" of intervention in Greece and the present Truman doctrine of non-intervention in China. If it makes sense to pour money and supplies into the Greek civil war, it should make at least equal sense to do the same in the Chinese civil war. Mr. Truman's assertion that we have "no predatory designs on Formosa" is close to admission that we have "predatory designs" on Greece.

The appalling tangle into which opportunism has brought us is the more deplorable because the Department of State could easily have advanced a reasonable explanation for its flounderings. Secretary Acheson could have said frankly that while the principle of "containing" Communism is sound, this country simply cannot afford to apply it on a global basis. Mr. Acheson could have said that our Greek adventure has been too expensive, and too dubious in its accomplishment, to risk repetition on a far larger scale in China. Such an explanation would have been frank and honorable, and the more impressive when backed by the explicit and implicit revelations in the President's budget message.

But this admission would be out of character for the present Administration. Taking the cue from his predecessor, Mr. Truman refuses to admit that anything is beyond his power. Then, when the inevitable frustrations arise, they are glossed over with hypocritical and sanctimonious phrases which can only serve to play into Communist hands.

Actually, we should be grateful to the British for their forthright if painful decision to recognize Red China. It knocks the props from under the whole jerry-built structure of our post-war "diplomacy". With increasing insistence Americans will now ask why we should pour

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billions into the containment of Communism in Europe if our allies there are willing to make terms with Communist regimes in Asia.

This is a reasonable question which the Department of State will find increasingly difficult either to evade or answer. Perhaps the only satisfactory answer now would be the cry of confession: "Oh, what a tangled web we weave when first we practice to deceive!"

III

The tragedy of China is the more poignant, and the more dangerous, because our recent policy towards that tragic country has been lacking in elementary honesty. Secretary Acheson asserted, at his press conference on January 5, that "when the United States takes a position it sticks to that position and does not change it by reason of transitory expediency or advantage". Unfortunately, the record says otherwise.

On November 26, 1941, in the virtual ultimatum to which Japan replied by attacking Pearl Harbor, the State Department demanded that Japan should not support "militarily, politically, economically, any government or regime in China other than the National Government" headed by Chiang Kai-shek. If it were true that when we take a position we stick to it, we should be sending a similar ultimatum to Great Britain today.

The record further shows that at Yalta, on February 11, 1945, Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin agreed that Soviet Russia should receive important territorial and economic concessions in the Far East. These concessions, providing the springboard from which the Communists proceeded to conquer all of China, included the complete surrender of Outer Mongolia to Russia and recognition of "the pre-eminent interests of the Soviet Union" in Manchuria.

Stalin was not merely given these priceless advantages at Chinese expense. He was given them without any consultation with our Chinese Ally. As Secretary Acheson himself has written, in the letter transmitting the China White Paper to President Truman: "It was not until June 15, 1945, that General Hurley was authorized to inform Chiang Kai-shek of the [Yalta] Agreement", concluded behind Chiang's back four months earlier. The White Paper itself says (p. 115): "It was . . . unfortunate that China was not previously consulted."

Diplomatic chicanery of this sort is bad enough in itself. But when followed by rhetorical asseverations of "the fundamental integrity" of our policy towards China, the hypocrisy becomes intolerable.

IV

Since the sell-out at Yalta it has been impossible for those who have studied the record objectively to regard our Chinese policy with anything but contempt.

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In his letter transmitting the Chinese White Paper to President Truman, an attempt to gloss the ugly facts was made by Secretary Acheson. So that the war might be quickly ended, he said: "We . . . were prepared to and did pay the requisite price." But Mr. Acheson failed to emphasize that the price paid to Stalin, for one week of Russian participation in the war against Japan, was paid at Chinese expense, and without informing the Chinese of the secret transaction. Against this black background Mr. Acheson now says that "we stand for principle", that "we are honorable" and that "we do not put forward words, as propagandists do in other countries", to win a temporary advantage.

All that we can accomplish, by this sanctimony, is to consolidate the Chinese behind the Mao Tze-tung regime. The Chinese Nationalists realize, if we do not, that the United States has sold them down the river. It will be wholly understandable if all in a position to do so rally behind the Communist Government, the more so since the latter shows every disposition to pay us off in our own coin.

The background also explains why the British, reluctantly but firmly, are dissociating their Far Eastern policy from our unpredictable and indefensible gyrations. As the friendly Manchester Guardian observed, in its weekly issue of January 5: "It is rare for a government to repeat its mistakes so exactly and so quickly as Mr. Truman's Administration has now done." Perhaps we can afford a blundering diplomacy. The British cannot. So they have split with us to recognize the Red China that we have done so much to consolidate.

Of course this split between Britain and the United States weakens the whole basis of our European policy, simultaneously with the complete collapse of our policy in Asia. It is not surprising that Moscow should choose this moment to open a propaganda offensive in Finland, in Italy and in Germany. The time to cash in on our mistakes is at hand.

It is a dismal picture; one that presages a swift and sweeping revulsion in popular thinking. Indeed, an outstanding question now is which of the two parties will more quickly see the domestic implications of growing disillusion. In November, 1940, both Democratic and Republican leadership were for intervention. In November, 1950, as the tide is running, a bipartisan policy of isolationism would not be surprising.

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events Vol. VII, No. 2

By Frank C. Hanighen January 11, 1950

STATE OF THE UNION: The predominant motifs of the State of the Union and economic messages were the glories of "managed recovery" and the promise of indefinite "managed prosperity". Happy in their confidence that the managerial revolution is complete, the President's economic advisers distributed some soothing words and pleasant nods to business and the farmers, and proceeded to present the following whopping myth: that they had managed it this way last year; that when recession loomed, the managers had provided wise counsel for groups of lesser breed; and the latter had obediently collaborated with their Lords and Managers.

On February 16, 1949, this column recalled the remark in Alice in Wonderland, "take care of the sense and the sounds will take care of themselves". And we pointed out that Mr. Truman's advisers made no sense at all, and therefore neither did the screams of Mr. Keyserling. At a time when commodity markets were crashing, what were the managers saying? Were they handing down sage advice on how to handle the then quite visible recession? Quite the contrary. Keyserling was spouting about the continuing danger of inflation! Only months later did Keyserling see the light (which lesser breeds had perceived months before) and started to warn of the dangers of deflation.

But if Mr. Truman's listeners in the well of the redecorated Senate chamber failed to react to the managers' fable, they did, as politicians, respond with guffaws to the President's assertion that all our troubles were the fault of the 80th Congress and its reduction of taxes. Then ensued a curious incident about which Capital observers are still talking. The President grinned, then actually joined in the laughter at himself. It was, of course, all in a spirit of affable fellowship -- a former Member of Congress jesting with his erstwhile colleagues. As such, it was good politics for a President desirous of soothing Congress to laugh at himself. But had he forgotten the glare of the television lights? What effect would this incident have on millions who watched it on the TV screens? Would they be shocked, or at least conditioned to deem Presidential utterances as simply cynical, as merely "political oratory"?

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LABOR: We learn from reliable sources that repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act is not on the calendar of the House Labor and Education Committee. Our informants believe that this omission was prompted by the White House, thereby signifying that the Democratic Administration has no present intention of trying to repeal the Act in this session of Congress.

Coal operators have moved to obtain an unfair labor practice injunction against the miners. The Labor news letter Interpreting the Labor News (January 5, 1950) warns that this may prove a political boomerang: "The injunction provisions of the law have been the chief means of whipping up workers' hatred for the 'Slave Labor' Act. . . . in no case of importance enough to attract general notice has industry ever [before] used the injunction. To the contrary, the only use of the injunctive process important enough to be a matter of public knowledge has been that of Mr. Harry S. Truman. It was Mr. Truman's use of the injunction in 1947 and 1948 that sent major Labor leaders and their political allies, the Americans for Democratic Action, frantically scurrying, in June, 1948, for any other Democratic candidate than 'Harry'. It had an undoubted influence in throwing the major industrial states into the Dewey column. It is still effective medicine for the 1950 elections. Un-

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der the conditions, industry's use of the injunction process, which cannot fail to receive the widest possible public knowledge, will give union leadership a solid propaganda base instead of their present shaky one. And it will be skillfully utilized in November. If it is argued that the operators' move is aimed at forcing a total walkout which in turn will force Mr. Truman to invoke the 'emergency' injunction and so shift the onus to him, we greatly fear that the strategy will backfire." In other words, the ire of union Labor may then be directed at Business rather than President Truman.

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FORMOSAN DEBATE: The debates on the Formosa question in the Senate were highly interesting. Senator Knowland presented at length and brilliantly a thorough review of the situation. His attitude was temperate, his subject matter well-informed. Not as much could be said of Senator Connally, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee and spokesman for the State Department. That gentleman engaged in what many in the press gallery call "characteristic Connally clowning". In the January 5 session, he had an usher bring in a large brass spittoon and place it by his desk; from that bastion he emerged from time to time with remarks which were picturesque, if nothing else. Connally, in fact, led the Democrats -- aided by Lucas and McMahon -- in a sort of charade of apprehension; professed fears that aid to Formosa would precipitate us into open war with the Chinese Communists. Taft dryly remarked that "the rejection of any idea of using our armed forces to stop the advance of Communism in the area in question is wholly inconsistent with what we have agreed to do in stopping the advance of Communism in Europe".

The hypocritical excitement of the Administration Senators over Formosa as a cause of war provoked a military man who listened to the debate to explain scornfully: "Our whole Military Aid Program for Europe is an infinitely greater danger of war than any amount of aid sent to Formosa. In Europe we are actually provoking the Bear who has a mighty army in Eastern Europe, capable of crashing through to the Pyrenees in 60 days or less. What could the few paltry forces we have in Germany and the small army of France do to stop the Russians, if Stalin gave the word 'go'? Formosa is about 100 miles off the mainland, and the Chinese Communists possess neither a navy nor air force. As a matter of fact, the defense services take the view that no troops need to be sent to the island -- only munitions, supplies and advisers. There's much less risk than we ran in Greece."

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MILITARY POSITION OF FORMOSA: One of the more flagrant pieces of hocus-pocus in the Formosa affair has been the attitude publicly attributed to the military. Attributed by whom? By the State Department. Mr. Acheson's Department keeps reiterating triumphantly that the Joint Chiefs of Staff have rated Formosa as of negligible military value. Yet, simultaneously, any observer in Washington could hear the muffled groans from the Pentagon. What exactly is the real view of the admirals and generals? A little research across the Potomac produced the following version. It is quite true that the Joint Chiefs rendered an opinion and the opinion was rather negative -- but not on the main issue. The State Department craftily framed and sent to the Joint Chiefs a question -- Is Formosa essential to any offensive against the China mainland? The Joint Chiefs replied -- not much. But that is not the main issue. If the State Department sought an answer on the main issue, the question should have been -- How important is Formosa to the defense system of island bases selected to contain Communist expansion. The answer (which the Joint Chiefs were anxious to give) is "extremely important". By neutralizing, or occupying Formosa, we would deny to the Reds a point from which, if they took it, they could work irreparable damage to containment.

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SARDONICS: Mr. Michael J. McDermott, press officer of the State Department, was quoted as saying (Baltimore Sun January 5): "We are never ashamed of what we do. Sometimes there are things which are intended for official use. Sometimes the public interest is protected in not putting them on the table." It is unfortunate that Mr. McDermott did not shield the p.i. in the case of a green, black and white streamlined booklet of State Department propaganda in behalf of Point Four. It contains on the third page some curious geography. The world is pictured as divided among three stages of development: (1) underdeveloped; (2) intermediate; and (3) developed. We learned some things we never knew before from this instructive map: That Alaska is considered to be "developed", and so are the wastes of Labrador and the desert of Northern Australia, whereas industrial Japan and the great mining center, Union of South Africa, are not.

---- There are other things from which Mr. McDermott should perhaps protect us -- such as the very alert advertising division of his Department. During the last week we received in the mail an advertisement in behalf of the State Department White Paper at the time when the Administration was applying the white brush to its policy on Formosa.

---- Last week was indeed a difficult time for our bewildered senses. For instance, we had heard for many years that Guam was our absolutely last ditch, the one bastion which we should never yield. Dark was the day when the Japs captured it, happy the day when we regained it. And we recalled how Members of Congress were labelled "traitors" and "isolationists" (synonymous in those days) because they had refused to appropriate for a dredge in Guam harbor. But, lo! on the very day when Mr. Truman dismissed Formosa as peanuts, and Senator Lucas descried great danger of war if any American military advisers landed on Formosa, on that very day the Navy Department publicly announced that 2,000 marines, the garrison on Guam, were being withdrawn to barracks in the United States. At last, we begin to comprehend Mr. Acheson's semantics: it is "isolationist" to hold islands in the Western Pacific; it is properly "interventionist" to abandon them and bring the boys home.

---- But the knockout blow to our mental equilibrium during the past week came from Mr. Walter Lippmann. In an article (January 10), marked by his usual devious logic, Lippman reached the conclusion that the world's only hope for peace is for Germany and Japan to "become buffer States between the Great Powers" of Soviet Russia and the United States. As we recall, there was a notion to this effect floating around in the late Thirties, and it bore the label of Mr. Neville Chamberlain. At that time, Mr. Lippman didn't like it. If the idea is valid now, why wasn't it valid then? And if it was valid then, why World War II?

---- We are also interested in the philosophy of Sir Stafford Cripps, about whom Winston Churchill once remarked, "There but for the grace of God, goes God." Early in his ordinate as a sort of super-chaplain for the British Labor Government, Sir Stafford told the folks of the beauties of materialistic Socialism -- according to him, a true earthly paradise would be created. But now today as he ponders more measures of austerity for his congregation and realizes he can't give them any more material goods, Sir Stafford delivers the spiritual goods, in a sermon which he delivered in St. Paul's last Sunday. He warned: "Uncontrolled materialism, rising in a crescendo of power, must crash in self-destruction." We suggest that this is the crash of the opening gun in the British election campaign.

---- One more important matter. An Associated Press dispatch (January 9) from Cuernavaca, Mexico, said: "Faye Emerson filed suit today for a quick divorce from Elliott Roosevelt, son of the late President. She hopes to be free by February." In short, the Fifth Freedom, freedom from Roosevelt.

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Book Events

Space, Time and Architecture, by Siegfried Giedion. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Harvard University Press. $10.00. Reviewed by J. M. Lalley.

Some readers of HUMAN EVENTS, I trust, are familiar with another fascinating work by the Swiss Professor Giedion called Mechanization Takes Command, reviewed in this space a few years ago. In that book he essayed to show how the characteristic schizophrenia of the modern mind and the fragmentations of modern culture are intimately related to modern methods of work and production, and to the progressive divisions of labor; and, according to Professor Giedion's compatriot, Dr. Max Picard, this atomization and irrelevance of life finds its ultimate political expression in the totalitarian State. Professor Giedion's theme was developed through a study of the transformations wrought by industrialism in household furnishings and various other intimate and humble artifacts. The present work, which has been reissued in a new and enlarged edition, embodies some famous lectures given at Harvard more than a decade ago, in which Professor Giedion demonstrates that schizophrenia, or dissociation, is also manifest in our sprawling, amorphous and unmanageable cities.

The root disorder of our times, and peculiar to the industrial epoch, as Professor Giedion tells us, is an almost total separation of thought and feeling. The modern man has not been able to adjust his imaginative and aesthetic faculties either to the radical implications of his new mathematical theories or to the outward changes that have resulted from the accelerating advance of the natural sciences. With the accumulation of discoveries science itself has disintegrated into specialties, each intelligible only to initiates. Man is now unable to control his technologies but is instead controlled by them. In short, there is no longer any general vision of reality in which all the elements of culture and civilization can be harmonized. It was from such visions that the various "styles" in the history of Western art were engendered and matured; in every age that produced a distinctive style an intimate interrelationship among its art, architecture, mathematics and social and political conditions is traceable. The absence of style in our own epoch is both the cause and the effect of the prevalent feeling among those who inhabit it that life has somehow lost all relevance and dignity. The conscious awareness of this may mean either that we are approaching the final disintegration of culture or that we are crossing the threshold of a new epoch of artistic achievement. Some of the most interesting pages of Professor Giedion's book show how the seeming eccentricities of modern painting and sculpture, such as cubism and futurism, represent an intuitive perception and application of the new relationships of time, space and movement, much as the characteristics of the baroque landscape were anticipated in the perspectives of the Renaissance painters.

The vital forces of the baroque spirit -- the Counter Reformation, the rise of the great monarchies, the mathematical innovations of Liebnitz, Kepler and Newton -- may be studied in its monumental architecture, in its churches and palaces and vistas, and in the effort of the builders to realize the notion of special infinity in elaborate vaulting and domes and undulating facades. The monuments of the Nineteenth Century, however, afford no such revelations; for its conspicuous architecture represents merely the series of "revivals", classical or romantic, in which the age strove for stability amid change by futile and sterile imitations of the past. The true genius of the Nineteenth Century must be sought rather in its utilitarian structures such as factories, warehouses, grain elevators, where the revolutions of form deriving from the use of new materials are first manifest. The consequence of the ever widening distance between the taste of the period and the tendencies inherent in the new methods of construction led to an all-pervasive artificiality, since it was necessary that the true character of everything be masked.

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